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Professor Joshua Lederberg  
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Dear Josh:

Ryan was just telling us the exciting news about your plans to go into neurobiology. I have often hoped that you might lend your talents to the behavioral sciences. Ryan didn't have many details, what with the brevity of his visit there and the efforts of attending to both you and Esther simultaneously. However, I gather that you intend to approach learning at the molecular level. He said that some of the instrumentation you developed for the exobiology work would be applicable, so I assume that the approach will be, at least initially, along the lines of Hyden's, involving automatic analysis of R<sub>1</sub>N<sub>1</sub>A<sub>1</sub>. Will this be single cell analysis, or do you have something else up your sleeve, such as cloning of nerve cells in tissue culture and maintaining the differentiated state? This should be worth a second Nobel prize.

It's gratifying to see that the Kennedy Foundation is supporting basic research, and not approaching mental retardation exclusively along conventional lines: more hospital beds, special education and training, new tests for early diagnosis, etc. I have recently gotten involved a bit in the mental retardation field, and was appalled at the dearth of research. It's even worse than in child psychiatry. We began studying some retardates, as a kind of sideline to our schizophrenia work, and have found wide variation in RBC esterases on starch gel electrophoresis. This does not occur in normal children or adults, and is apparently not due to exogenous factors, although this is not yet conclusive. Our samples aren't big enough yet to correlate the findings with clinical conditions, but we're going ahead with this and also with family studies. Meanwhile, the schizophrenia research may die a natural and perhaps inevitable death.

Ryan's visit was as usual delightful and stimulating. He had just come from Atwood's, was here for three days and stayed with us. He gave the keynote address for a series on genetic studies of mammalian cell cultures, then stayed around to consult in various departments at the University. He was exhausted at the end, but

seemed to enjoy it, and he certainly stimulated a lot of the people here. Shorty said it was the best thing that had happened in their department for a long time. As you perhaps know, Neel is going in heavily for tissue culture, and has imported a couple of men in the field for next year.

Ryan and I had agreed to exchange complimentary copies of our books. I wanted his for enlightenment, but it is inconceivable that mine should be of any interest to him, except perhaps the chapter on behavior genetics. Anyway, I finished writing mine just two weeks before his visit, and devoted the entire two weeks to studying Cell Heredity. It was an enlightening and satisfying session. I of course had a general notion of the newer genetics, but little knowledge of its experimental basis.

I don't remember whether you knew I was writing a <sup>x</sup>test book of child psychiatry. This has occupied most of the past year. Whether or not it will fill the great need existing in our field remains to be seen. At any rate it has been a real learning experience, and I don't at all resent the time and effort expended. The trouble is, I have come out of it with such a deepened awareness of the shaky structure of psychiatry that I may decide to get out altogether. The foundation on which it rests is held together mainly by a few old men who operate on little but faith and a big stake in the status quo. It would be **better** if the whole thing were allowed to crumble, then we could start building from the ground up. But this doesn't appear likely in our generation.

In case you're wondering, I have no specific purpose in writing this letter. I wanted to express my delight at your new undertaking, and would love to hear more about it. However, don't feel obliged to answer at this time, as you're undoubtedly busy making plans and getting ready for the Japan trip. Perhaps we could get together for a talk the next time you come East, or vice versa. Beyond this, I'm frankly interested in keeping in touch with the situation at Stanford. We haven't regretted our decision of two years ago, particularly in view of the uncertainties existing in the psychiatry department at that time. But, now that there is a good department head, I am again wondering what the plans are in child psychiatry. I am sure Hamburg has his own ideas about this, and perhaps he also has his own people selected.

Another major reason for our not coming, and one which I don't believe we discussed, was our feeling that the medical school was just too high-powered for us. We have serious misgivings about being able to measure up to what appears the standard pace there. Also, I'm not sure that this is altogether good for a medical school. The place seemed more like a research institute than a place to train doctors. I felt a lack of a sense of service, of patient care; and in a medical center, particularly in the psychiatry department, one must feel able and even encouraged to sit down in a quiet place and talk with the patient. (Of course, I don't want to do much of this myself, but somebody should.) Ryan felt that we may have gotten a biased notion of the pace there, and suggested that you and Norm Kretchmer aren't a representative sample.

Well, I hadn't intended to ramble at such length, but it's good to keep in touch from time to time. We always enjoy Esther's notes at Christmas time. Shorty and I will be in Oregon for the Human Genetics meetings in late summer and perhaps could come through Palo Alto.

Sincerely,

Hezy